

**LUNCH BREAK HEROES**  
PRESENTS

**TO THE  
DEPTHS**

**5E**  
COMPATIBLE

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# INTRODUCTION

In this salty and bone chilling adventure, characters find themselves lost at sea and down on their luck. The Rugged Runner, the ship which is bearing the characters to faraway lands, has been stranded amidst thick fog and jagged rocks. What's worse, it is under attack by a horrifying beast! The cursed monstrosity seeks the sailors' bodies to create an army of abominations and attack the main land. In order to survive, the characters must uncover the secrets of what lies below the waves and save as many poor souls as possible, lest they themselves never return to shore again.

This adventure can take place on any large body of water, far enough from land that no one would think to swim back, and is designed for 3-6 player characters of levels 2-4.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

Here are some potential adventure hooks to get your party's characters into this adventure:

- The party is on their way to a distant port to enjoy a well-deserved vacation after their previous adventure.
- Rumors of faraway treasure have caused the party to charter passage aboard the ship.
- The party has been hired as guards for the ship, as pirates have been known to patrol the area.

## BACKGROUND

Seven years ago, a pirate by the name of Cutthroat Calum terrorized the sea. Upon one of the many ships that his pirate crew captured, Calum discovered an orb that teemed with magic. With the original owners dead and no understanding of the device, it was simply added to the vast treasure hoard that amassed on Calum's ship, The Tainted Rose.

The **Abyssal Orb** awoke from its slumber and brought forth a terrible storm that caused the ship to run against stone and sink. All of the ship's crew were lost to sea, save for Cutthroat Calum, who was now stranded on a remote and desolate rock.

In a fight to survive, Calum swam down to the depths of the wreck to find supplies. Within the wreck, Calum came across the orb and was enraptured by the mysterious swirling patterns within. Upon touching it, the orb's evil powers struck out against Calum and transformed the pirate captain into The **Undersea Abomination!**

Now a slave to the orb's malignant will, Calum works to enact the Abyssal Orbs' true purpose. Having fully awoken, the orb wishes to sow chaos in a populated area. The only way of doing so is to reach civilization by taking over a ship and its crew.

Calum now lies in wait for a hapless ship to come by and become stranded in the terrible mists conjured up by the orb. He intends to terrorize it, take its crew one by one down to the orb's lair in the wreckage of The Tainted Rose, and turn them into horrible new creatures!

# RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is split into three acts.

**Act One.** Players are introduced to the crew of The Rugged Runner, and explore the mystery of what is causing disappearances on the ship.

**Act Two.** The party must battle against the horrible monster that is killing and stealing crew members' bodies. They discover that they must ultimately dive below the waves to stop it.

**Act Three.** In the sunken wreck of The Tainted Rose, characters battle against The Undersea Abomination and the Abyssal Orb that has cursed it. Various *potions of water breathing* are scattered throughout the ship to facilitate this.

To foreshadow the need to dive down below, here are some pieces of information that can goad your party along:

- After an attack, the creature always returns to the water and dives deep down.
- A mast of a ship can be observed if someone peers down into the waters below.
- A journal can be found on a nearby rock (area D1). The journal is of Cutthroat Calum and his exploits on the seas. The journal ends with Calum being stranded on this rock and passing the time collecting things from the ship below.

## NO ESCAPE

Over the course of the adventure, characters may attempt to run away from the area. A few factors will prevent them from doing this:

- There is no wind to push the ship along.
- The mist that permeates the area conceals deadly rocks, which would surely destroy the ship, even if it could move.
- The Undersea Abomination can chase down swimming prey over a long period of time. Exhausted prey is easy prey.

# Act 1

## MISSING CREW

This act sets the adventure in motion. It begins on the deck of The Rugged Runner after the ship is stranded amidst rocks in a thick fog, and ends when characters finally come face-to-face with The Undersea Abomination.

When you are ready to begin the adventure, read aloud the following text:

*Your travels along the seas have been a breath of fresh, salty air. Over the past days, the water and weather have been kind and fair. Likewise, the twelve-man crew of The Rugged Runner have been pleasant company.*

*In a bid to cut time off the voyage and take advantage of the clear weather, Captain Alfonse Eskeb announces his decision to plot course through a patch of sea known for its dangerous rock formations. The crew adjust sails accordingly, and the ship is on its way.*

*In the early hours of the morning, you are awakened to a stirring on the deck above. Making your way topside, you discover that a thick mist permeates the completely still air. You can hardly see more than a few yards in any direction, and overhear that the ship is now anchored in place, as it is too dangerous to sail in these conditions with the potential to run aground or against the jutting stones of the area.*

*As the crew members stand around idly, whispering to one another about the foul weather conditions, the captain's bark resonates across the ship. "If ye ain't workin', I ain't payin'! There's plenty to be done here, so get to it lads!"*

*At that, the small clusters of crew members break apart, with each man going about his duty on the ship. Four remain above, while the rest disappear down below deck.*

The crew of The Rugged Runner disperse to various locations on the ship. You may choose where each crew member goes, or place them at the following locations:

- **Crow's Nest (A1):** Jerry Buvig
- **Upper Deck (A2):** Femi Lutra, Nesver Fizlespark, Decky
- **Captain's Cabin (A3):** Alfonse Eskeb
- **First Mate's Cabin (B1):** Sydnee Hazel
- **Crew Quarters (B2):** Mirth Plainview
- **Kitchen (B3):** Garrick Blackburn, Melvin Graydraft
- **Common Area (B4):** Serna Hoppum, Lucia Cottle
- **Supercargo's Cabin (B5):** Dylan Highwater

At this time, allow players time to explore the ship and socialize with its crew. When you are ready, roll on the crew member table at the end of this adventure to determine who The Undersea Abomination will attack first, rolling again if the result is the captain, a duplicate, or within sight of the characters.

Repeat this process until three crew members have disappeared, or the characters have come across the site of an attack. If three crew have disappeared, another crew member will report the issue to the captain, who will bring it up to the characters. The rest of the crew will continue to do their duties until a clear and present danger is announced.

When the party comes across the site of an attack, they will find blood and a slimy residue. A DC 16 Nature check will reveal that the slime came from a living creature that involuntarily spread the muck about. If the crew is informed of this, wild speculations begin to fly about the ship, fueling fears that there is a monster on board, a ghost, or an impostor.

At this point, the crew begins to distrust one another and fears run rampant. They further scatter amongst the ship, and the party is left to figure out what happened to the missing crew members.

The captain will no longer have any charge of the crew and will lock himself up in his own quarters. The rest of the crew can be found hidden in other parts of the ship, fearful of what is at hand.

If the characters do nothing, the remaining crew will be dead in a matter of hours. It is only through action that the party can solve the mystery. Rallying the crew is a tough ordeal, requiring a DC 18 Persuasion check to snap them out of their fear and get them to work with others.

# Act 2

## FIGHT OR FLIGHT

This act begins when the characters first encounter The Undersea Abomination face-to-face. They must fight the beast off as best as they can, and save as many crew members as possible. The act ends when the characters decide to dive down and confront the abomination in its lair.

Once the party comes across the monster for the first time, read aloud the following text:

*Standing before you in a wretchedly hunched over position is a grotesque, slimy creature. Its skin oily black, its horrendous claws coated in blood, and its reptilian face bearing wicked fangs all point to this being the true horror that plagues this ship. This abomination stands at nine feet tall, with rippling muscles exposed under its slimy exterior. It lets out a spine-chilling hiss and proceeds to ravage its potential victims!*

The party may fight the creature, but it will return to the water if reduced to half health or below. Once in the water, it will regenerate and return to attack another crew member in 10-30 minutes. Repeat this process until no crew are left alive, or the characters have decided to dive below the water and confront the creature in its lair.

During this act, the tendrils of thick fog may part just enough for the party to see a large, flat rock jutting above the water's surface (Area 9), covered in detritus from The Tainted Rose.

# Act 3

## TO THE DEPTHS!

This act begins when the party resolves to go down below the waters, where they discover the wreck of The Tainted Rose. Within the hull of the ship is the Abyssal Orb, as well as the bodies of all its victims who are slowly being turned into abominations! It is only by destroying the orb that the abominations will cease to exist, and the pervasive fog that surrounds the ship will be lifted.

Once the orb is destroyed, read aloud the following text:

*The evil orb cracks in two, releasing the last of its terrible miasma into the water. The tendrils connected to all the dead sailors evaporate, leaving their bodies to sink into the depths. The Undersea Abomination that plagued the ship swims down into the hull in a vain attempt to save the fiendish orb. As the miasma dissipates, the foul creature begins to choke, seemingly on the water all around it. You see the oily skin begin to dissolve, and the horrible fangs and claws retract. By the end of the transformative process, you see the monster was but a man, who now lists dead in the waters. The horror of this journey is over.*

## CONCLUSION

Through decisive action, the party can destroy the source of evil before it spreads about the world. If The Rugged Runner is still intact, they may sail it back to shore on the winds that kick up soon after the orb's fog disperses. Otherwise, another merchant vessel, The Harbinger, will be along in five days.

If the crew and party were all victims of the abomination and the orb, then a crew of water-logged undead sails The Rugged Runner to the nearest port and begins to wreak havoc. A town taken over by a demonic orb would make for a compelling adventure!



# AREAS OF THE ADVENTURE

This section details the places characters can explore during this adventure. Each area is keyed to a location on the maps included at the end of this adventure.

## UPPER DECK

The upper deck of The Rugged Runner is where The Undersea Abomination will attempt to enter the ship, whenever it may remain undetected. The open space provides plenty of visibility (fog notwithstanding), but may leave one feeling exposed.

### A1. CROW'S NEST

*What is normally a wonderful vantage point from which to see the curve of the far-off horizon has now become an isolated spot amid the thick fog. Looking down, you cannot see the deck of the ship, let alone the water below.*

The crow's nest is the hiding place of Lookout Jerry Buvig, who has stolen some fine wine and is hoping to lay low until the mist subsides. He is found here for the entirety of the adventure, blissfully unaware of the goings on below unless disturbed by the characters.

## A2. MAIN DECK

*The open sea air fills your nostrils with the salty brine, while the thick fog prevents seeing anything beyond the ship. The doors to the lower decks lie open, and it appears as if the very mist is attempting to consume the interior. The mast stands as a motionless beacon in the center, with the sails resting completely still.*

The main deck leads to the captains' quarters and the lower deck. This is also where the anchoring mechanism is. If the anchor is drawn up while the abomination lives, it will wrestle the anchor and wedge it into a rock formation.

## A3. CAPTAIN'S CABIN

*This lavish room is decorated to the brim with fanciful trinkets and regal cloth. The bed is covered in fine sheets and draperies, all of which vainly conceal several wooden chests. A grand chest of drawers dominates one wall, while the other has a rope net draped across it, filled with trinkets from different ports. The back wall is covered in windows that would offer a generous view of the sea, but now reveal only the dismal whites and grays of the fog.*

The captain lives luxuriously, but is quite the hoarder. The fish net wall betrays his hoarding nature, with the chests and drawers revealing this even more. The tables' unlocked drawers contain journals and logs of the ships' previous ventures.

During Act 1, the captain will meander in and out of this area. In Act 2, he will crawl under the bed and attempt to hide from everyone.

**Treasure.** In one chest is a *potion of frost giant strength*. In a locked drawer (DC 15 Dexterity and thieves' tools to open) are two *potions of swimming*, which grant a swim speed of 30 ft.

## LOWER DECK

The lower deck of the ship is dark and cramped, stuffed full with sleeping areas, tables, and chairs. Stairs lead to the cargo hold, and doors lead to the kitchen, first mate's quarters, and XXX

### B1. FIRST MATE'S CABIN

*This cabin has all the makings of a prison rather than a home away from home. No decorations can be seen anywhere, save for the paper and writing utensils sitting on an otherwise empty table. A chest stands at the foot of the bed with a stack of leather-bound ledgers on top of it.*

The first mate will not return to her quarters after the start of Act 1. This room may be used by other crew members as a hiding spot.

The ledgers contain information on the current cargo. Most ledgers are of no interest, but a stand-out entry details crate containing seven *potions of water breathing*.

**Treasure.** Inside the unlocked chest are three sets of fine clothes, and a set of navigator's tools.

### B2. CREW QUARTERS

*Hammocks abound, with each crew member's belongings stored in chests underneath. Each hammock is personalized with various trinkets and personal effects.*

If any crew members are here during Act 2, they are hiding under a pile of dirty clothes in the corner.

**Treasure.** Each crew member's chest is locked (DC 12 to open). Femi's chest contains a *potion of greater healing*. Scattered among other chests are 50 gp, 35 sp, and 200 cp.

## B3. KITCHEN

*Various foodstuffs line a shelf on the wall of the dark kitchen, readied for a meal that will not be cooked. Various knives and pans hanging on hooks, and the brick oven stands cold and empty. A large wooden island dominates the center of this room.*

During Act 2, the cook can be found hiding underneath the kitchen island, clutching a butcher's knife and trembling in fear.

**Treasure.** The kitchen contains 5 daggers and various improvised weapons.

### B4. COMMON AREA

*A wan light spills in from the grate in ceiling above, illuminated a small table with cards and coins scattered about its surface—a gambling game interrupted in its prime. On the starboard side stands an iron-barred cage that serves as the ship's brig.*

Lucia and Serna abandoned their game when the attacks began.

During Act 2, Melvin can be found here, having locked himself inside the brig.

**Treasure.** On the table rests 12 gp a golden ring worth 10 gp.

### B5. SUPERCARGO'S CABIN

*Despite the supercargo's best efforts, this small room remains a ramshackle mess with half broken furniture scattered about. A hammock has been strung up on one side, likely to avoid using the warped and bent frame of the bed opposite. A wash basin, table, and trunk sit along the wall across from the door.*

During Act 2, Dylan Highwater can be found hiding inside of the trunk, having thrown its contents (clothes, mostly) about the room.



## CARGO LEVEL

The cargo level of the ship is even more cramped than the lower deck, having not been designed for habitation. The passageways between crates are narrow and dark. The only light here comes from the grate in the ceiling above. A ladder leads down to the bilge.

### C1. CARGO HOLD

*Rows upon rows of crates line the cargo hold's floor, in some cases even rising to the ceiling, which opens to the deck above via removable cover. The crates are mostly unmarked, though some stand out with lettering or intricate designs. While most of the crates are sealed, it is evident one has been opened, and its contents taken. Where the contents have wandered off to is anybody's guess.*

The crates in the cargo hold contain crew supplies and trade goods, and some contraband items. The stolen goods were taken by Jerry Buvig, which consisted of fine wines.

During Act 2, sailors may hide here amidst or inside of the crates.

**Treasure.** Seven *potions of water breathing* are in one of the crates. Characters can stumble upon them after opening 1d6 crates, or they may be led to it by the Supercargo or the ledgers in the first mate's quarters.

## C2. BILGE

*Water has risen to ankle deep at the bottom of the bilge. The water here stinks of the salty ocean, and the dark corners of the lightless room make their presence well known. Several barrels are tied to the ceiling with rope nets, with one dangling precariously on the edge ready to fall to the floor below.*

The bilge is regularly flushed, though today the task hasn't been performed. Deck Hand "Decky" has stashed a few barrels of contraband down here, believing no one else would come down here.

During Act 2, Decky will be hiding in one of the dark corners.

**Treasure.** The barrels consist of rum, tobacco, and the one dangling over the edge holds a stolen *wand of magic missile*. Decky will retrieve this item during Act 2 and use it against anyone who comes down into the bilge unannounced, fearing that they are the monster.

## EXTERIOR

Thick fog heavily obscures the ship's surroundings, making it impossible to see more than a few yards in any direction. During Act 2, a momentary clearing reveals the presence of area D1 off the ship's port bow.

### D1. SEA ROCK

*A sea battered rock stands alone amongst the sea of mist. While the rock is well worn by the sea's tides, a clear set of indentations are seen near the lip of the rock. They are tally marks, and they are written as if their author was sitting on the edge. From this view, the faint visage of a sunken ship resting in the depths below can be made out. Tucked away in a crevice is a small book.*

This is the rock upon which Cutthroat Calum was stranded when The Tainted Rose sunk. His

journal has been tucked away in a crevice, and is still partially readable. It details his travels and exploits, and ends with an entry about a planned dive down to the wreckage for supplies.

## D2. THE TAINTED ROSE

Once the party dives down to wreckage of The Tainted Rose, read aloud the following text:

*Looming out of the darkness before you is a terrifying sight. The bodies of all the dead sailors now float here, tethered by black tendrils to an glowing orb that radiates a dark purple, swirling cloud.*

*You see the orb's tendrils pulse with energy, pumping it into the floating corpses, which respond in kind by emanating a growing miasma around them. One of the bodies has a clear sign of transformation, as its hands have become dark claws, and its skin is covered in a viscous black sludge. You see before you the cause of the abomination that has wreaked havoc on your voyage!*

Touching the **Abyssal Orb** is a dangerous matter, as it exudes a terrible aura. Upon touching the orb, the character must make a DC 16 Con saving throw, taking 5d8 necrotic damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.

If the orb is damaged in any way, or if The Undersea Abomination spots the characters, combat will begin. All of the dead sailors' bodies will be activated to defend the orb, rising as waterlogged undead. Hopefully the party was able to save a few sailors and thus go against fewer enemies!

# CREW OF THE RUGGED RUNNER

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The following table provides information on the twelve-man crew of The Rugged Runner. All crew members are fair game for the Undersea Abomination, and all are equal prey in its eyes. Determine the creature's next victim by rolling a d12, rolling again on duplicate results.

d12	Position & Name	Stat Block	Description
1	<b>Captain</b> Alfonse Eskeb	Noble	Loud and boisterous. Dislikes authority, and delegates whenever possible. Disorganized and cowardly.
2	<b>First Mate</b> Sydnee Hazel	Bandit Captain	A diligent sailor who strives for order and cleanliness. Appreciates the beauty of a tight ship, and wields her sharp authority well.
3	<b>Lookout</b> Jerry Buvig	Commoner	Lazy and often drunk. Spends most of his day either sleeping in the crow's nest or talking the crew's ears off.
4	<b>Cook</b> Garrick Blackburn	Commoner	Aspires to be a great chef on a fine ship one day, but lacks the culinary abilities. Jovial, charismatic, and nearly always upbeat.
5	<b>Quartermaster</b> Melvin Graydraft	Commoner	The oldest of the crew by a wide margin. Retains a sharp mind despite his years, and coaches young sailors.
6	<b>Deck Hand</b> Femi Lutra	Bandit	Newest crew member. Tends to hop from ship-to-ship in a bid to see the world. Inquisitive of other people's pasts and journeys.
7	<b>Deck Hand</b> Serna Hoppum	Bandit	Stoic and serious, but always willing to lend a hand. Speaks very little unless spoken to by the captain or first mate.
8	<b>Deck Hand</b> Lucia Cottle	Bandit	An avid gambler who is always chasing the next big win. Jovial and willing to teach others a new game, if only to take their money.
9	<b>Deck Hand</b> Mirth Plainview	Bandit	Almost always in a sour mood, despite his name. Complains about anything outside of his control, such as the weather and his pay.
10	<b>Deck Hand</b> "Decky"	Bandit	Does not know his real name after too many blows to the head. Speaks quickly with a thick accent few can understand.
11	<b>Deck Hand</b> Nesver Fizzlespark	Acolyte	Youngest of the crew. Holds a spark of magic, and is saving money to attend a mage's college.
12	<b>Supercargo</b> Dylan Highwater	Noble	Haughty and aloof. Dresses immaculately. Believes that representing the owner of the ship's cargo puts him a station above all others.

# THE UNDERSEA ABOMINATION

The Undersea Abomination has only one goal in mind, and that is to drag the corpses of The Rugged Runner's crew down to the sea wreck below. There, the bodies will be used to create more creatures in service to the orb.

During this adventure, it will repeatedly attack the party and crew. Its intention is to kill the weakest target and take its corpse below to enact its ritual. The bodies are turned into **Waterlogged Undead**, and will prove to be an obstacle for the party in Act 3.

Use the following guidelines for running attacks by The Undersea Abomination:

- Attacks happen every 10-30 minutes of in-game time.
- When boarding the ship, it may climb in from the open deck, through a port window, or it can smash a medium sized hole in the hull above the sea line. If a window or the hull is smashed open, the noise can be heard from anywhere on the ship.
- When it boards the ship, it leaves a slimy residue in its wake.
- It will attempt to go after smaller groups of crew whenever possible. Isolated sailors are especially vulnerable.
- When it attacks, it attempts to kill 1-2 people before dragging the bodies back to its lair.
- It will retreats if reduced to half health.
- If the creature is restrained in any way, it will use its Daemonic Mist feature to escape to the water.
- Between attacks, it will swim around The Tainted Rose or under The Rugged Runner.

## UNDERSEA ABOMINATION

*Medium aberration, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 66 (7d10 + 24)

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

<b>STR</b> 23 (+6)	<b>DEX</b> 15 (+2)	<b>CON</b> 19 (+4)
<b>INT</b> 9 (-1)	<b>WIS</b> 16 (+3)	<b>CHA</b> 7 (-2)

**Condition Immunities** Charmed, Frightened, Poisoned

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 13

**Languages** Abyssal

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +3

**Regeneration.** The undersea abomination regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

**Oily Skin.** The undersea abomination leaves an oily trail behind where it walks and crawls. It has advantage on checks against grappling.

## Actions

**Multiattack.** The undersea abomination makes two attacks with its claws.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5ft., one target.  
*Hit:* 11 (2d4 + 6) slashing damage.

# ADDITIONAL STAT BLOCKS

## ABYSSAL ORB

*Small object*

**Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 52 (15d4 + 15)

**Speed** 15 ft., swim 15 ft.

STR 10 (+0)	DEX 10 (+0)	CON 12 (+1)
INT 18 (+4)	WIS 18 (+4)	CHA 13 (+1)

**Condition Immunities:** Blinded, Charmed, Frightened, Incapacitated, Paralyzed, Poisoned, Prone, Stunned

**Senses** Passive Perception 14

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 3 (900 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Dark Aura.** Each creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the orb must succeed on a DC 14 Charisma saving throw or subtract 1d4 from its next attack roll.

### Actions

**Abyssal Lash.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 30ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6) necrotic damage.

## WATERLOGGED UNDEAD

*Medium undead, chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 10

**Hit Points** 16 (3d8 + 3)

**Speed** 15 ft., swim 15 ft.

STR 15 (+2)	DEX 11 (+0)	CON 13 (+1)
INT 3 (-4)	WIS 8 (-1)	CHA 6 (-2)

**Condition Immunities** Charmed, Poisoned

**Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 9

**Languages** —

**Challenge** 1/2 (150 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus** +2

**Undead Fortitude.** If damage reduces the waterlogged undead to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is from a critical hit. On a success, the waterlogged undead drops to 1 hit point instead.

**Putrid Waters.** The first time the waterlogged undead takes damage, any living creature within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain disadvantage on attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on it early with a successful save.

### Actions

**Slam.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

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